

February 19, 1982

NSC review completed.

MEMORANDUM FOR: John Hughes

FROM: PGW/PACO - Csaba T. Czikos

SUBJECT: Strengthening the USF Mechanism for Coordinating Public Diplomacy Initiatives

REFERENCES: Hughes/Ledeon, Thomas Memorandum, February 12, 1982  
Hughes/Raymond Memorandum, February 17, 1982

There is agreement in the referenced memos that the experience of inter-Agency foreign policy public affairs coordination represented by Project Truth has been a valuable first step which now needs consolidation. Similarly, the two memos seem to agree that a major shortcoming of the existing mechanism is the absence of an overriding strategic dimension in the coordination of the various component activities of Project Truth. To emphasize this point the memos point to the need to strengthen Project Truth's ability "to launch and sustain major information campaigns" ... "particularly involving the incremental build up of a major campaign". We are all familiar with the frustrations of lost opportunities during the past few months because the Project Truth mechanism lacked the authority to request participating agencies to either speak up or stand down as warranted by a broadly coordinated strategic timetable.

The referenced memos propose as a remedy the strengthening of the existing inter-Agency group established under Project Truth rather than the establishment of yet another committee. It would seem to be the most efficient approach at this time to seek White House clarification of support for Project Truth's mandate and to define its relationship to the other inter-Agency foreign affairs working groups.

An NSC directive can designate the Project Truth Coordinating Committee consisting of top officials from the USG foreign affairs agencies, as the organ charged with coordinating the public affairs dimension of U.S. foreign policy. The Coordinating Committee can delegate its authority for strategic policy to the Project Truth Policy Group and to the Executive Committee for ongoing coordination of sustained information campaigns on major policy objectives as defined by the Policy Group.

The existing ambiguities surrounding the organization and authority of the other inter-Agency foreign affairs working groups can be resolved by gathering them under the Project Truth umbrella. These committees organized by geographic area - or thematically, as the situation warrants - will be the producing elements of the Executive Committee and report to it on their activities. Each of the agencies represented brings to the table its special strength and mandate. Some of us are prohibited from engaging in domestic public affairs activities but charged with overseas advocacy.

- 2 -

programs, while others are charged with gathering and providing the raw material for our information products. The Department of State is responsible for developing the domestic support for U.S. foreign policies which, vital in any democracy, are mirrored through our media to overseas electorates we wish to address. In any event there need be no confusion about the specific responsibilities and prohibitions governing the activities of individual participating agencies in such a joint effort.

Central to any strengthening of the Project Truth mechanism is the need for a clearly defined mandate acknowledged by the heads of the participating agencies. Indeed coordination implies the authority to order participating agencies to produce or to refrain from action in accordance with strategic considerations. In the absence of such authority the inter-Agency Project truth mechanism is reduced to the status of a clearinghouse for the exchange of information.

Inter-Agency cooperation has evolved even this far is an unprecedented, and perhaps unanticipated development for which no small gratitude is owed the Project truth initiative. However, the time has come to consolidate these gains and to begin in earnest the strategic coordination of foreign policy public affairs programs.